



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6239.0 - Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, Jul 2006 to Jun 2007 Quality Declaration

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### **Over half a million women available to take up a job or more hours but not looking: ABS**

There were 1.7 million adult Australians who said they wanted to play a greater part in the labour force but couldn't for a variety of reasons, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The vast majority (1.4 million) of these people were not employed but wanted a job. A smaller number of people (273,000) who usually worked less than 16 hours a week wanted to work more hours.

However, less than a third of people (512,000) who wanted to play a greater part in the labour force were actively searching for work or for a job with more hours. The remaining people were either not available (337,700), or were not actively looking for a job or more hours (800,600).

There were approximately half a million women who were available to take up a job or work more hours but were not looking.

Of these, just over one in four (26%) cited 'caring for children' as the main reason they were not looking. Almost half (42%) of these women said that they 'preferred to look after children', while 21% reported issues with cost, and a further 14% issues with availability.

Other common reasons why women were not looking for work or more hours included 'studying/returning to studies' (12%) and disability (8%).

Study was also a common reason for men. Of the almost 300,000 men who were available to take up a job or work more hours but were not looking, one in five (58,000) gave 'studying/returning to studies' as the main reason.

A further 16% (45,000) of men who wanted a job or more hours but were not looking said the main reason was that employers considered them to be too old.

Further details can be found in *Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, July 2006 to June 2007* (cat. no. 6239.0).

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